

**From:** Maverick  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 6:03pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

Hello,

Some of my professional associates pointed me to this email address as a place where I could voice my concerns over the severely lacking Microsoft Settlement. In essence, the proposed settlement as it stands will do nothing to remedy the damages caused to the computing industry by Microsoft, and does nothing to punish them for doing it.

Dan Kegel has written an excellent analysis of the weaknesses in the PFJ here:  
<http://www.kegel.com/remedy/letter.html>

I have also asked to have my name added to those listed below.

I don't have the time to cover every problem in detail (and I suspect you may not have time to read it), so I will only cover what seems to be the least obvious and most overlooked way in which Microsoft extends and maintains their strangle hold on the industry: Proprietary file formats.

Few would argue that Microsoft Word document files have become the de facto standard document exchange format. Most of my clients send me documents in Word format, and most expect to receive them in Word format. That has been the norm for every company I've been employed by, and every client I've worked for.

What happens when someone sends another a document in Word Format (or Excel, PowerPoint, etc, etc)? The sender is not only making the assumption that the receiver has purchased a Microsoft Operating System and purchased a copy of Microsoft Word, they are assuming that they have CURRENT versions of both. It is a well documented fact that different version of the same Microsoft products produce files that are not readable by differing versions of the same product. And the same version of a product doesn't run on all versions of Microsoft's operating systems. Thus forcing all users in to an constant cycle of upgrades of both their operating system and office product.

The proprietary nature of the formats, along with their constant alteration prevents a third party from reverse engineering the format to produce a competing product. By the time that they can produce a product that can accurately read and write a Microsoft Office file, there is a new version of Office on the market that isn't compatible, and thus making their product's ability moot.

I hope that this has shed some light on the concerns of the case, and helps lead to a remedy for the damages caused by Microsoft.

Thank you for your time,

Steven Edwards

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